From: SICB Headquarters
Subject: #ShutDownSTEM initiative

On Wednesday, June 10, a multi-identity, intersectional coalition of academic-activists is calling for one full day to pause all business as usual to demonstrate the contributions of Black intellectuals and their allies to academia. Time and time again, academic research and publications have been used to reinforce anti-Blackness in schools, legislation and communities. This day of action serves as a means to acknowledge the longstanding anti-Black biases in academia. It provides a moment for Black academics and STEM professionals to prioritize their needs, and a moment for white and non-Black People of Color (NBPOC) to educate themselves and define a plan of action.

SICB wholeheartedly supports the #ShutDownSTEM movement. We would like you to be aware of the excellent resources for various learning tracks the action’s organizing group has collected. We encourage you to explore these resources on your own, share them with your research group and colleagues, and generate meaningful and action-oriented conversation.

Participation in this action encourages individual responsibility for education about racism. In participating, we recognize that Black people in STEM often unfairly bear the burden of educating the rest of the STEM community. We also demonstrate support in offering our Black colleagues a break from their undue onus of continuing work while shouldering much of the ongoing civil rights movement. This action serves as one contribution to the mass of actionable changes demanded of academia.

At this point in time, it is not enough to be passively non-racist. The abolition of racism will come only through action; we need to be actively anti-racist. SICB will not tolerate racism, and thus actively takes part in dismantling anti-Blackness and racism in our laboratories, work spaces and classrooms.

SICB asks its members to make time to reflect on the loss of Black lives, both recent and past, and to contemplate the experiences of Black academics and STEM professionals (#BlackinIvory) in the same way one would contemplate any intellectual subject. Non-Black SICB members must take initiative and support our Black colleagues, students, and friends. Simply put, academia needs the Black voice.